

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ST. PETERSBURG AUDUBON SOCIETY CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, the St. Petersburg Audubon Society celebrates its centennial anniversary this month, marking 100 years of serving our community's conservation and awareness of local birds and the wild areas they call home.

The St. Petersburg chapter, Florida's oldest, was founded in 1909 as part of a crusade by the Florida and National Audubon Society to save wading birds from extinction. At that time, birds' feathers, aigrettes, and wings were used to decorate women's hats. This threatened many of Florida's unique wading birds with extinction. The result of this effort was the saving of these species of birds for future generations of Floridians and visitors to Florida to watch and enjoy.

The St. Petersburg chapter, under the leadership of President Mauri Peterson; Vice President Maureen Arnold; Secretary Nancy Ogden; Treasurer Rick Potter; and Board Members Harold Albers, Mary Brazier, Wanda Dean, Judi Hopkins, Saskia Janes, Dave Kandz, Mark Mueller, Lee Snyder, and Alice Tenney; continues to serve our community in many important ways including conservation leadership and educational opportunities. These activities include weekly field trips, monthly programs, and a long list of volunteer activities.

Specifically, the St. Petersburg Audubon Society raises funds to give Pinellas County fourth grade students an Audubon Adventure program, to provide scholarships to National Audubon Ecology Camps for local teachers, and to give monetary awards to Science Fair winners. The chapter also hosts its annual Pinellas Native Plant Society meeting every December to bring together members of local environmental organizations for a time of celebration and education.

The members of the chapter have also done what they do best — protect our shorebirds and habitats. They helped establish the Shell Key County Preserve and they led an effort to conduct a comprehensive study of beach-nesting birds in partnership with Eckerd College, Pinellas County government employees, and public land managers.

Chapter members have even taken their work neighborhood to neighborhood and house to house through their "In Harmony With Nature" programs to help homeowners create wildlife-friendly habitats in their yards and to become aware of bird nesting in their own neighborhoods. And they continue to sponsor annual Migratory and Christmas Bird Counts, a Florida tradition that dates back to 1900.

A special exhibit about the centennial celebration will be unveiled this Saturday at the St.

Petersburg History Museum. It will feature information about the chapter's founder Katherine Bell Tippetts, milestones from the chapter's history, and information about the chapter's continuing commitment to the community.

Madam Speaker, The St. Petersburg Audubon Society continues to serve our community today just as energetically as it has throughout these past 100 years. The members of the chapter volunteer to protect our local wildlife and natural habitats and to make Pinellas County a better place to live. Please join me in congratulating the members of the St. Petersburg Audubon Society for their rich history of service.

CRYSTAL BELL AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to commend seven exceptional teachers from Northwest Indiana who have been recognized as outstanding educators by their peers for the 2008–2009 school year. These individuals are: Robert Backe, Elizabeth Eaton, Wendy Magley, John McCarthy, Nancy McClatchey, Tom Reed, and Donna Scheidt. For their outstanding efforts, these honorees will be presented with the Crystal Bell Award at a reception sponsored by the Indiana State Teachers Association. This prestigious event will take place at the Andorra Restaurant and Banquets in Schererville, Indiana, on Tuesday, May 5, 2009.

Robert Backe, an eighth grade science teacher at Grimmer Middle School, has been in the teaching profession for more than 38 years with the Lake Central School Corporation. Throughout his tenure, Bob has always made a point of bringing fun and enjoyable learning into his labs in order to make sure his students remain interested and actively involved in science. In just one of many examples of his innovative lessons, Bob, an avid Chicago White Sox fan, organized a trip to a game as a means of showing his students how even a baseball game can be integrated into their studies.

Elizabeth Eaton, from the Hanover Community School Corporation, has been a role model and a true inspiration to not only her students but to adults in her community as well. For the past 38 years, Elizabeth has motivated her students to excel inside and outside her classroom. Known for her expertise in gardening, Elizabeth's efforts have led to the creation of an outdoor lab at Lincoln Elementary School. For the past 11 years, she, with the assistance of many of her students, has worked tirelessly to preserve this remarkable example of nature's beauty. For her efforts, Elizabeth Eaton has been named the "Lake County Conservation Teacher of the Year," and her lab has been recognized for being the first of its kind in Lake County.

This year's recipient of the Crystal Bell Award from the Tri-Creek School Corporation is Wendy Magley. Wendy, of Lowell Senior High School, has been in the teaching profession for the past 28 years. The passion Wendy has for teaching and for her students goes far beyond the classroom. In addition to the grueling task of preparing for six English classes, Wendy also coaches basketball, where she instills in her players the same principles of hard work and dedication that she expects of her students. One other example of the immense impact she has had on her school and her students, Wendy spearheaded the creation of the Lowell High School Shakespeare Festival, which has been a memorable experience for hundreds of high school students.

Currently an elementary school teacher at Ernest R. Elliott Elementary School, John McCarthy is this year's recipient from the School Town of Munster. A truly selfless educator, John has made a point of preparing children to not only become better students but to become better people as well. John's desire to accomplish this goal is witnessed through his dedication to the Camp Tecumseh program. As participants in this program, Elliott Elementary's fifth graders partake in activities that promote team-building, positive values, and personal growth. In addition to his personal involvement with the students, John has also served on numerous committees with the School Town of Munster that aim to improve the quality of life and education for the students.

Nancy McClatchey, this year's recipient from the North Newton School Corporation, has had an outstanding teaching career, marked by innovative programs that allow her students the opportunity to experience real-world settings as part of their curriculum. Over the past 19 years, the Family and Consumer Science teacher at North Newton High School has developed a program that is recognized statewide. An educator whose responsibilities seem endless, Nancy's efforts have led to the creation of the ProStart Culinary Arts Program, which aims to make students better prepared for careers in the food service industry, and the Advanced Child Development and Cadet Teaching programs, which allow aspiring future educators the opportunity to gain critical experience in a classroom setting.

This year's recipient of the Crystal Bell Award from the Crown Point School Corporation is Thomas J. Reed. Tom has been nurturing young minds and sharing his passion for music for the past 22 years. Known for his enthusiasm and willingness to put in extra time to work individually with his students, Tom has also had an immense impact on younger educators. Tom has shown true commitment to his students and his community through donating his time and efforts to programs such as the local 4H and the Lake County Fair. He has also made his mark on his community through his musical abilities, where he can often be found performing at weddings, at church, and within the community.

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